

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03
ACDA-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USLOSACLANT NORFOLK VA
USNMR SHAPE BE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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NOFORN

ANKARA FOR USCENTO REP AND CHIEF US ELEMENT CENTO;
USCINCEUR AND CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, CENTO, MILI, IT, TU
SUBJECT: NATO-CENTO AIR DEFENSE INFORMATION EXCHANGE
AGREEMENT

REF: (A) STATE 070897 (DTG 310129Z MAR 77), (B)
ISLAMABAD 3696 (DTG 150914Z APR 77), (C) USNMR SHAPE
251500Z APR 77

SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO REF A'S REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND
INFORMATION ON A POSSIBLE NATO AGREEMENT WITH CENTO OR
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IRAN UNDER CENTO AUSPICES WHICH PERMITS AN EXCHANGE OF AIR
DEFENSE DATA, WE BELIEVE,

--THERE APPEAR TO BE NO "LEGAL" OBSTACLES TO SUCH A RELA-
TIONSHIP;

--FOR SOME ALLIES, HOWEVER, POLITICAL RESERVATIONS ARE

LIKELY TO OUTWEIGH POTENTIAL MILITARY VALUE TO THE TWO ALLIANCES;

--IF AN AGREEMENT IS SOUGHT, A NATO-CENTO ACCORD PROBABLY STANDS A BETTER CHANCE OF GAINING NATO APPROVAL THAN DO OTHER ALLIANCE-RELATED ALTERNATIVES;

--A BILATERAL TURKEY-IRAN AGREEMENT MIGHT PROVE AN ALTERNATIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. REF A INQUIRES INTER ALIA ABOUT POTENTIAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO SEEKING: (A) A FORMAL NATO-CENTO AIR DEFENSE INFORMATION EXCHANGE AGREEMENT; (B) A FORMAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATO AND IRAN UNDER CENTO AUSPICES; AND INDIRECTLY TO (C) A POSSIBLE FORMAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATO AND IRAN (WHICH WASHINGTON SUGGESTS NATO COULD PROBABLY NOT ACCEPT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE). IN OUR VIEW BOTH TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS UNDERLINE THE NEED FOR A CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO PURSUING A FORMAL AGREEMENT AT NATO.

2. AS REF C SUGGESTS, THE "PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT" OF 1974 APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN MORE AN AGREEMENT TO AGREE THAN THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF A PROCESS OF VALUE TO EITHER OR BOTH OF THE ALLIANCES. IF A FORMAL AGREEMENT IS TO BE SOUGHT AT NATO, THE TECHNICAL ARGUMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY MARSHALLED BY NATO'S MILITARY AUTHORITIES, AND THEY WOULD HAVE TO SEEK ACTIVELY THE SUPPORT OF NATO'S POLITICAL AUTHORITIES.

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3. WE SEE NO REASON FROM A NATO STANDPOINT WHY ANY ONE OF THE APPROACHES REFERRED TO IN REF A COULD NOT BE USED IF--AS IS UNLIKELY -- NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL AGREEMENT COULD BE SECURED. THE COUNCIL CAN MAKE AGREEMENTS WITH WHOMEVER AND WHATEVER BODY IT WISHES. THE ONLY REQUIREMENT IS A UNANIMOUS WILLINGNESS TO DO SO. FORMAL NATO CONSENT TO ANY OF THE APPROACHES TO A FORMAL AGREEMENT LISTED IN PARA 1 IS UNLIKELY BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO SECURE SUPPORT OF ALL ALLIES. SUCH SUPPORT IS UNLIKELY BECAUSE:

--OVER THE YEARS CANADA, NORWAY AND DENMARK HAVE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT NATO TIES WITH CENTO AND ITS FORERUNNER, THE BAGHDAD PACT. THEIR RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN BASED ON POLITICAL GROUNDS, NOT ON NATO'S LEGAL RIGHT TO ESTABLISH SUCH LINKS. FRANCE ALSO MIGHT HAVE POLITICAL RESERVATIONS.

--AT A TIME OF TURBULENCE IN RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, MANY ALLIES MAY HESITATE TO ENDORSE A PROJECT WHICH GREECE MIGHT SEE AS HELPING TURKEY. ALLIES WILL ALSO

WISH TO SEE THE EXCHANGE OF AIR DEFENSE DATA BETWEEN
GREECE AND NATO AND BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY REINSTITUTED BEFORE ATTENTION IS TURNED TO LINKS RUNNING FURTHER EAST.

--SOME ALLIES MAY BE AWARE OF POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS
FOR CENTO, PARTICULARLY PAKISTAN'S RELUCTANCE TO
ACCEPT CLOSER CENTO TIES WITH NATO UNLESS THE ARGUMENTS
IN FAVOR ARE COMPELLING. SOME ALLIES CAN ALSO BE EXPECTED
TO BE SUSPICIOUS OF THE SHAH'S MOTIVES IN DESIRING AN

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AGREEMENT.

4. WITH REGARD TO PARA 5(C) OF REF A, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING
COMMENTS ABOUT THE FORMS OF AGREEMENT WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERED:

--NATO-CENTO: A DIRECT NATO-CENTO AGREEMENT WOULD PROBABLY
BE THE MOST PALATABLE IF A FORMAL AGREEMENT IS SOUGHT.
THE ALLIANCE HAS LONG HAD FORMAL (EXCHANGE OF MILITARY
INFORMATION AGREEMENT) AND INFORMAL (CENTO OBSERVES AT
SELECTED NATO EXERCISES, EXCHANGES OF VISITS AND ANNUAL

CALL AT NATO HEADQUARTERS BY CENTO SECRETARY GENERAL) TIES WITH CENTO, AND THE US HAS TRADITIONALLY SUPPORTED THE CONCEPT OF A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATO AND ALLIANCES WITH SIMILAR OBJECTIVES. WE RECALL THAT AT THE DECEMBER 1957 COUNCIL MEETING IN PARIS, THE US ARGUED

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FOR SUCH CLOSER NATO LINKS WITH THE BAGHDAD PACT, SEATO AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES "AS WILL FACILITATE AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND OPINION, ON A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE BASIS". THE ALLIES AGREED IN PRINCIPLE AND AT LEAST OFFICIALLY CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE GENERAL CONCEPT. HOWEVER, POLITICAL RESERVATIONS ABOUT INSTITUTIONAL LINKS OR AGREEMENTS RELATED TO THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN REGIONAL ALLIANCES AROSE PRIOR TO THE 1959 COUNCIL DECISION TO APPROVE FORMALLY AN EXCHANGE OF MILITARY INFORMATION BETWEEN NATO AND THE BAGHDAD PACT. THESE RESERVATIONS, WHICH REMAIN ALIVE, LED TO RESTRICTIONS ON THE CLASSIFICATION AND KIND OF MILITARY INFORMATION WHICH CAN BE EXCHANGED BETWEEN NATO AND CENTO. MOST ALLIES ARE RELUCTANT TO GET INVOLVED OUTSIDE THE NATO TREATY AREA, AND THIS RELUCTANCE WILL AFFECT ANY ATTEMPT TO SECURE A FORMAL AIR DEFENSE EXCHANGE AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATO AND CENTO.

--NATO-IRAN UNDER CENTO AUSPICES: AN AGREEMENT WITH IRAN UNDER CENTO AUSPICES MIGHT HAVE LESS CHANCE OF GAINING NATO APPROVAL THAN ONE SEEN AS A RELATIVELY STRAIGHTFORWARD ALLIANCE-TO-ALLIANCE ACCORD. AT NATO SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE SEEN AS INVOLVING THE ALLIANCE WITH AN INDIVIDUAL MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRY OUTSIDE THE TREATY AREA, AND OBTAINING MAJORITY SUPPORT, MUCH LESS THE NECESSARY CONSENSUS, FOR SUCH A STEP STRIKES US AS IMPROBABLE.

--NATO-IRAN: WE BELIEVE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATO AND AN INDIVIDUAL NON-NATO NATION, PARTICULARLY ONE OUTSIDE THE TREATY AREA, IS EVEN LESS LIKELY THAN THE OTHER ALTERNATIVES. BUT WE ARE NOT CONVINCED NATO (AS AGAINST SACEUR) IS PRECLUDED FROM ENTERING INTO SUCH AGREEMENTS AS SUGGESTED IN PARAS 4 AND 5 OF REF A. FOR MANY YEARS, FOR EXAMPLE, NATO HAS EXCHANGED CLASSIFIED MILITARY INFORMATION WITH NON-NATO NATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH SPONSORING NATIONS. APPROVAL OF REQUESTS MUST BE UNANIMOUS.

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A FORMAL ONGOING EXCHANGE OF AIR DEFENSE DATA WOULD, HOW-

EVER, BE SEEN AS A NEW DIMENSION NOT COVERED BY THE INTENT OF PRESENT NATO REGULATIONS. CAREFUL SPADEWORK WOULD BE REQUIRED IF THERE IS TO BE EVEN A MARGINAL HOPE OF SECURING A CONSENSUS AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL AT NATO FOR SUCH AN AGREEMENT, AND A CONSENSUS IN ANY CASE IS MOST UNLIKELY AT THIS TIME. OF COURSE, THE JUDGMENT AT NATO OF THE VALUE OF AN AGREEMENT COULD CHANGE IF IRAN DEVELOPS AN OPERATIONAL AWACS SYSTEM.

5. GIVEN THE PRESENT SLIM CHANCE OF ANY TYPE OF FORMAL AGREEMENT, WE CONCLUDE THAT THE MOST REALISTIC APPROACH WOULD BE A BILATERAL TURKISH-IRANIAN AGREEMENT, WITH TURKEY BEING PROVIDED INCENTIVES TO FEED THE PRODUCT IT RECEIVED FROM IRAN INTO THE NATO AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. WE RECOGNIZE THAT SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD NOT READILY ASSURE A DIRECT FLOW OF INFORMATION TO NATO, WOULD NOT RESULT IN NATO FUNDING, WOULD NOT SATISFY THE SHAH'S DESIRE FOR CLOSER TIES WITH NATO AND MIGHT BE RESISTED BY THE GREEKS. BUT IT WOULD PROBABLY STAND A BETTER CHANCE OF RESULTING IN AN ONGOING DE FACTO EXCHANGE OF AIR DEFENSE DATA BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WITH WHICH WE ARE FORMALLY ASSOCIATED THAN WOULD AN ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE AN AGREEMENT WITHIN NATO. WE SUGGEST WORKING TO THIS END IN THE HOPE THAT THE SHAH COULD BE CONVINCED TO OFFER FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO TURKEY IN EXCHANGE FOR AIR DEFENSE INFORMATION DIRECTLY ACQUIRED BY TURKEY AND PERHAPS THE HOPE OF EVENTUAL CLOSER LINKS WITH NATO ITSELF. STREATOR

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